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Wednesday

JANUARY 4, 2012 | A PUBLICATION OF The Washington Post | NEWS, ENTERTAINMENT, ARTS, LIFESTYLES | FREE DAILY

DAN STEINBERG/AP

POSSIBLE MOTIVE

L.A. arson suspect railed against the U.S. before fires began 3

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SWIPED AWAY?

If your SmarTrip card isn't adding up, there's a good reason 9

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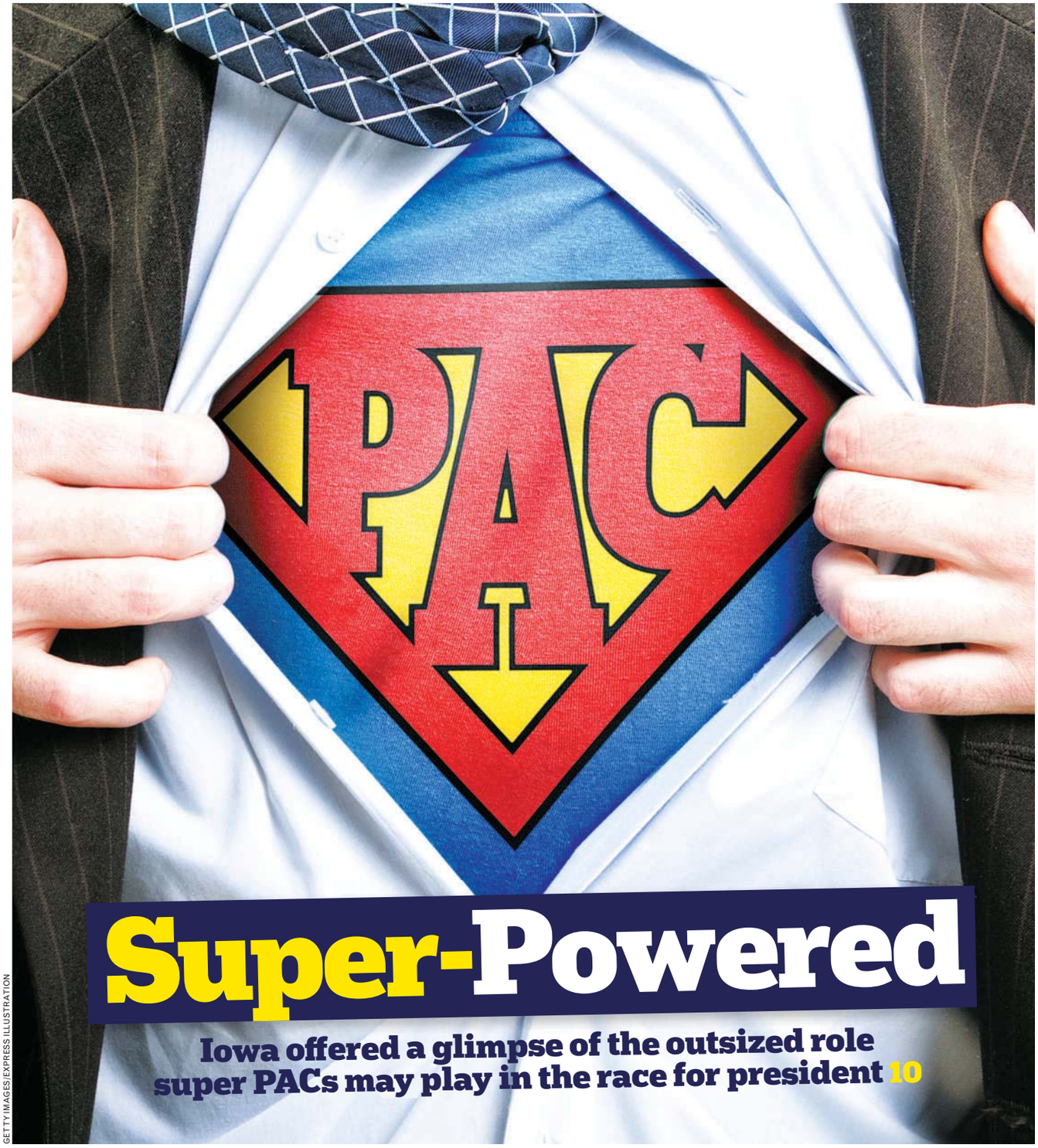

GETTY IMAGES/EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

Super-Powered

Iowa offered a glimpse of the outsized role super PACs may play in the race for president 10

eo

eye openers

INEXPLICABLE

'It's Not Like It Could Be Easily Taken Apart and Removed in a Small Truck!'

Someone obviously liked the back deck of a Clarksville, Tenn., home. The person stole it. Jadranko Beslic and his wife lived in the house while he was in the Army, but it has sat vacant for about a year. When a potential renter went to look at the house, the 10-foot-by-12-foot deck was gone. Beslic said he was baffled. (AP)

MYSTERIOUS STRANGERS

'Sorry for Killing Your Goat. Love, the Prince of Darkness'

Oregon State Police arrested a man who says he planned to sacrifice a goat. A woman called police after the man asked to buy one of her goats. A state trooper who talked to the man says he had planned to steal and sacrifice the animal and was in the process of writing an apology note. (AP)

EXCUSES

'You Were Just Following the Flow of Traffic — to My Heart'

A Chicago-area woman is suing a traffic police officer for allegedly using a speeding ticket he issued to her to track her down and ask her out. Evangelina Paredes says police officer Chris Collins pulled her over on Oct. 22. Two days later, she found a hand-written note on her windshield allegedly from Collins, saying he couldn't stop thinking about her. (AP)

The Big Picture

YOSHIKAZU TSUNO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

HIS PREFERRED MEDIUM IS PASTELS: A sea lion named Jay writes the word "Dragon" in Chinese characters as part of a New Year's attraction at the Hakkeijima Sea Paradise aquarium in suburban Tokyo on Tuesday. (GETTY)

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LUMINEERS BY CERINATE

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Motive Sought in L.A. Arson Case

German man cursed U.S. at mom's court hearing prior to fires

Los Angeles

Harry Burkhart watched as his mother was arrested Dec. 28 on fraud charges from their native Germany, and a day later he exploded in an expletive-laced rant against the U.S. at her court hearing.

The next day, police say, the 24-year-old began a nighttime rampage of more than 50 arson attacks that terrorized Los Angeles.

Authorities have yet to disclose why they believe that the ponytailed, 24-year-old Hollywood resident set the fires, but his mother's legal trouble provides one glimpse into the turmoil in his life.

Court documents unsealed Tuesday said Dorothee Burkhart, who is in her 50s, was charged with 19 counts of fraud in Frankfurt, including failing to pay for a 2004 breast-augmentation surgery and pilfering security deposits from renters.

In a brief court appearance, she appeared perplexed, wondering aloud whether her son was dead. At one point, she said, he is mentally ill.

"Where is my son? What did you do to my son?" she asked U.S. Magistrate Judge Margaret Nagle.

Harry Burkhart was being held without bail after being arrested in the arson case Monday.

Outside Harry Burkhart's Hollywood apartment, some neighbors described him as a loner who loitered around the busy commercial strip at night and could be heard arguing with his mother. But Shlomo Elady, a hairstylist who regularly trimmed Harry Burkhart's hair, said he was stunned that the man who lived with his mother above his Sunset Boulevard shop is suspected of torching vehicles, some just steps from his home. The fires caused an estimated $3 million in damage.

MIKE MEADOWS/AP

A car owner tries to retrieve possessions from his vehicle as it burns Monday in Los Angeles. Arson suspect Harry Burkhart's mother said in court he was mentally ill.

ONSCENE.TV/AP

In a video still, Harry Burkhart is shown being arrested Monday in Los Angeles.

"He loved his mom the way every son loves his mom," Elady said. "He's not a creepy guy."

Harry Burkhart was taken into custody after authorities received a tip from federal officials who recognized him in a security video that showed a ponytailed man emerging from a garage where a car was set ablaze.

"When they saw the security footage, they recognized him," a State Department official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the investigations are ongoing. BRADLEY KLAPPER AND MICHAEL R. BLOOD (AP)

The Nose Knows? Franky the drug dog's nose is at the heart of a question being put to the U.S. Supreme Court: Does a police dog's sniff outside a house give officers the right to get a search warrant for illegal drugs? Florida's highest state court said Franky's ability crosses the constitutional line. The state's attorney general wants the Supreme Court to reverse that ruling. The justices could decide this month whether to take the case. (AP)

In Brief

NEW ORLEANS

BP Wants Halliburton To Pay for Spill Cleanup

BP reiterated claims Monday first made last April that it is entitled to payment from Halliburton Energy Services for expenses and lost profits resulting from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon offshore oil well disaster. Halliburton says BP is trying to saddle it with far more than its share of the legal burden. (AP)

NEW YORK

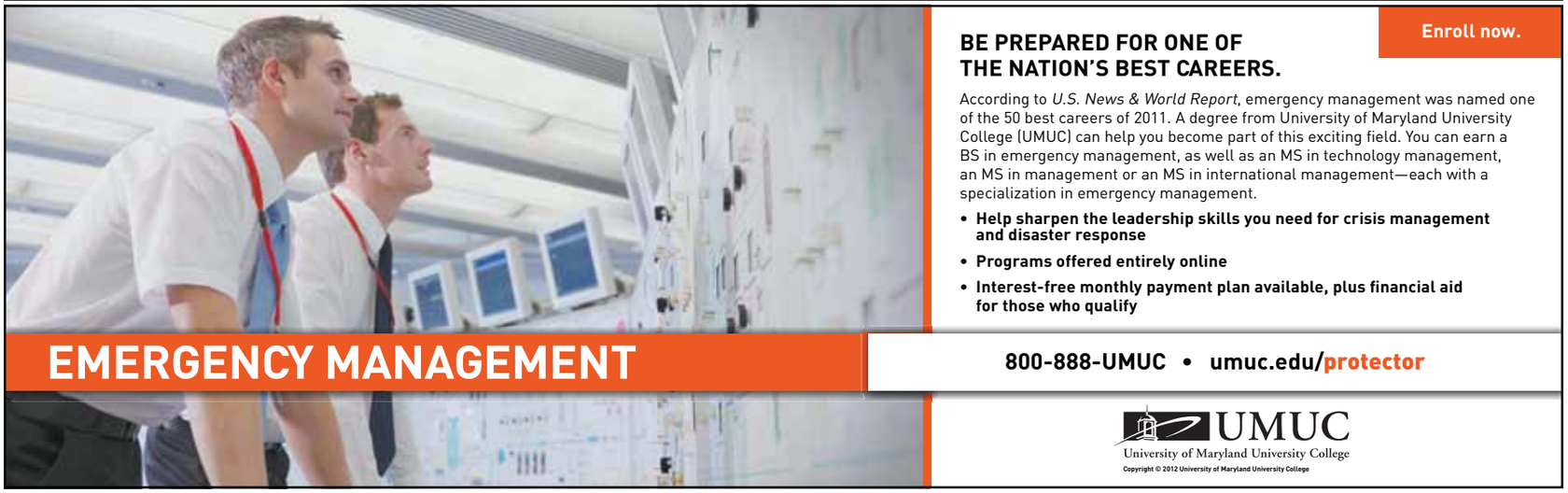
NYPD: Suspect Admits Islamic Center Attack

A man confessed Tuesday to hurling crude Molotov cocktails at an Islamic cultural center and four other New York-area sites on New Year's Day because of personal grievances with all of the targets, police said. His name wasn't immediately released. (AP)

LITTLE ROCK, ARK.

Body Found in Forest Was Missing Dispatcher's

The Garland County, Ark., sheriff's office said Tuesday that a body found in a forest over the weekend was that of Dawna Natzke, a 46-year-old police dispatcher last seen alive leaving a party before Christmas, and a family member said detectives had ruled the death a homicide. Natzke, who recently separated from her husband, was last seen alive Dec. 21 with her boyfriend, 28-year-old Kevin Duck. (AP)



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Nation

Burst of Optimism Boosts Stocks

First trades of 2012 leap on U.S., Europe economic reports

New York

The stock market got a big jump on a better year.

After a flat 2011, stocks rose sharply Tuesday in the first trading of 2012 after investors returned from the holiday and found encouraging economic reports from the U.S. and around the world.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 179.82 points, or 1.4 percent, to 12,397.38, its highest close in more than five months.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index, a broader gauge than the Dow, finished up almost 20 points at 1,277. The S&P finished 2011 almost exactly where it started — down a sliver, 0.04 of a point.

Money managers also usually get a fresh infusion of cash at the beginning of the year because workers who maxed out their contributions to retirement accounts well before the previous year ended start contributing again.

These investors are back hunting for bargains, he said: "Investors are a lot like dieters and look to January as a new beginning."

January is a fairly good predictor of the year for U.S. stocks. Only seven times since 1950 has January turned out to be a "major error" in predicting the year to come, according to the Stock Trader's Almanac. In other words, whichever direction the market has gone in January, the rest of the year has usually followed.

But there's no special power to January. A strong market in any single month makes it more likely that the market will be higher over the 12 months to come, Dan Greenhaus, chief global strategist at the brokerage BTIG, pointed out in a note to clients.

"As goes any month, so goes any 12-month period," he said. "This is not the exclusive province of January." PALLAVI GOGOI (AP)

Direction

January Effect

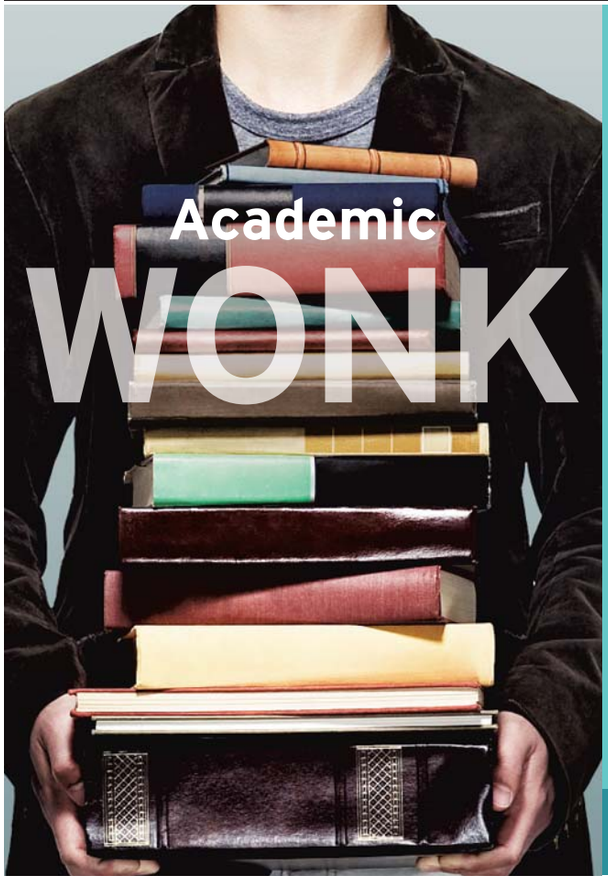
The market may have gotten an extra boost from what's known as the January effect: Investors sell stocks at the end of the year to lock in losses for tax purposes, then come back in January and buy stocks again. The effect could be more pronounced this year because the stock market was so volatile in 2011 and more investors had losses to take, said Sam Stovall, chief equity strategist at Standard & Poor's Capital IQ. (AP)

Holland, Mich., Digs Out After Big Snowstorm

DENNIS R.J. GEPPERT/AP

CHRIS MATTSON SHOVELS SNOW off his driveway on Tuesday in Holland, Mich., a day after the city's first substantial snowfall of the year. The snow total in Holland hit 10.5 inches by 7 p.m. on Monday.

.50 **The price increase** that took effect Monday for the New York Times if bought at a newsstand — $2.50 for the Monday-through-Saturday editions. (AP)



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Nation

New Life-Forms Found in Deep-Sea Vents

Washington

Oceanographers exploring some of the most remote deep-sea hot springs ever found have discovered what they say is a "riot of life" in a distinct biological zone that no one knew existed. They said the exploration, which occurred more than a mile down in the ocean just north of Antarctica, uncovered the most strikingly unique assemblage of life-forms found in decades, including thousands upon thousands of a species of crab never seen before, and new barnacle, anemone, snail and starfish species.

Deep-sea hydrothermal vents can spew out water at temperatures of more than 800 degrees.

In 2010, a group of Oxford scientists and others used a remotely operated vehicle to maneuver about 8,000 feet down into the icy sea. Shouts from the scientists watching the monitors quickly drew everyone on board to gaze upon a landscape blanketed by what they quickly realized was a new species of kiwa crab. The findings were published Tuesday in the journal PLoS Biology.

TWP

Oxford scientists lower a vehicle 8,000 feet to study deep-sea vents in 2010.

"They almost looked like a pile of skulls sitting on the seabed," says the team's leader, Alex Rogers, a deep-sea biologist at Oxford University. "It was an amazing, amazing sight." MARK SCHROPE (THE WASHINGTON POST)

CONGRESS

Unfortunate Rank

After The Washington Post released a story on the richest 25 members of Congress, a reader asked on Twitter who the 25 poorest members are, so The Post wrote another story. Topping the list is Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Fla., who had an average net worth of -$4,732,002 in 2010, according to an analysis by the Center for Responsive Politics. (TWP)

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World

In Brief

AP

Residents cheer for Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang, North Korea, on Tuesday.

PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA

N. Korea Rallies Support Behind Kim Jong Un

Pumping their fists, tens of thousands of North Koreans packed the main square of the capital Tuesday to pledge loyalty to new leader Kim Jong Un as the campaign to consolidate his power deepened. State television also aired footage of Kim's recent visit to an elite tank unit in a display of his authority. (AP)

ATHENS, GREECE

Athens: Without Bailout, Greece May Drop Euro

Greece's government warned Tuesday that the country will have to ditch the euro if it fails to finalize the details of its second, $169 billion international bailout and that more austerity measures may need to be implemented. (AP)

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

Taliban Unveil Plans To Open Office in Qatar

The Taliban announced Tuesday that they will open an office in Qatar to hold talks with the U.S., an unprecedented step toward a peace process that might lead to a winding down of the 10-year war in Afghanistan. This is the first time the militant group has publicly expressed willingness for substantive talks. (AP)

SAO PAULO

Brazil: 294 Companies Treat Workers as Slaves

Nearly 300 employers in South America's biggest country submit workers to slave-like conditions, Brazil's Labor Ministry said Tuesday. A ministry statement said its "dirty list" now has 294 employers, an increase of 52. (AP)

Iran Ratchets Up Gulf Tensions

Defiant Tehran hints U.S. aircraft carrier should stay away

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Iran closed out 10 days of naval war games in the Gulf on Tuesday much the way they began: striking a tone of military defiance while Western powers rallied behind tougher oil and financial sanctions as a crippling tool against Tehran's nuclear program.

The standoff atmosphere — less than a week after Iran warned it could block one of the world's key oil tanker sea lanes, the Strait of Hormuz, in response to economic pressures — appeared to deepen further as an Iranian general suggested a U.S. aircraft carrier is not welcome to return to the Gulf.

Gen. Ataollah Salehi, Iran's army chief, didn't cite a specific vessel, but the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet has said that the aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis and another vessel headed out from the Gulf.

In Paris, meanwhile, France's foreign minister said there is "no doubt" that Iran is moving toward a nuclear weapon and urged Europe to match America's tighter sanctions set in motion last week. Alain Juppe said the measures could include imposing an Iranian oil embargo.

A Western snub of one of OPEC's heavyweight exporters would still leave Iran with such oil-hungry markets as China and India — and give Tehran crucial economic lifelines to resist the U.S. and its allies. But worries that Gulf tensions could disrupt supplies sent oil above $101 a barrel and piled more pressure on Iran's currency, the rial, which hit record lows against the dollar earlier this week.

"It's clear the economy is in dire straits and the sanctions are having an impact no matter what Iranian officials say," said Salman Shaikh, director of the Brookings Doha Center in Qatar. "But that doesn't mean Iran will bend to the West."

Iran has proposed restarting talks on its nuclear program, which Tehran insists is only for peaceful energy and research purposes. The offer to reopen dialogue is widely interpreted as a sign that Western sanctions are taking a serious bite. BRIAN MURPHY (AP)

'High Vigilance'

The U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, based in Bahrain, is one of the Pentagon's main counterbalances to Iran's expanding military role in the Gulf. France and Britain also have warships stationed in the region. In addition, U.S. allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates recently closed deals for major arms purchases. A Pentagon spokesman said Tuesday the U.S. presence in the Gulf is in compliance with international law and the Navy would maintain what he called a "constant state of high vigilance" in order to ensure the flow of sea commerce. (AP)

Indonesian Protest Filled With Sole

ACHMAD IBRAHIM/AP

AN ACTIVIST LINES UP SANDALS Tuesday in Jakarta, Indonesia, in a display of outrage over the trial of a 15-year-old boy accused of stealing a pair of sandals from outside a house used by police. The youth, who faces up to five years in prison if found guilty, will appear in court Wednesday. Protesters have been leaving shoes at police stations across the country.

SECURITY

Possible App Idea

A Canadian man who realized he forgot his passport as he approached the U.S. border found a new way to gain entry — his iPad. Martin Reisch said Tuesday a slightly annoyed U.S. border officer let him cross into the United States from Quebec after he presented a scanned copy of his passport. Reisch told the officer he was heading to the U.S. to drop off Christmas gifts for his friend's kids. He said that true story, the scanned passport and his driver's license helped him get through last week. (AP)

102 **The top wind gusts, in miles per hour, in Edinburgh, Scotland, on Tuesday,** as strong winds lashed the U.K. The British meteorological office reported extremely high winds in several parts of the country, leading to power outages, seaport closures and hazardous driving conditions. Many flights and train services were also disrupted. (AP)

World

Egypt Begins Final Voting Round

Elections are likely to seal Islamists' grip on parliament

Cairo

Islamists looked to seal their domination of Egypt's first democratically elected parliament as Egyptians voted Tuesday in the final round of multistage elections.

The end of voting and the convening of parliament, due Jan. 23, could set the stage for jostling for authority between the ruling military and lawmakers. The two sides must work out how to put together a 100-member panel to draft a new constitution.

Leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is on track to emerge as the largest bloc by far in parliament, demand the legislature be allowed to choose the panel. However, the military is trying to grab a role for itself to ensure that it continues to be above any civilian scrutiny.

The military has said that presidential elections would be held before the end of June, but it has yet to say whether the drafting of the new constitution should come before the vote, as Islamists want.

The generals, who took power after the Feb. 11 fall of Hosni Mubarak, say they will step aside when a new president is sworn in.

Elections for the 498-seat parliament are the first to be held since Mubarak's ouster. The vote, which began Nov. 28, has been the fairest and freest in memory.

In the third and final round of the election, about 14 million voters were picking 150 members of parliament on Tuesday, the first of two days of voting. Final results are due Jan. 13. (AP)

Meanwhile ...

Egypt's chief prosecutor, Mustafa Suleiman, delivered a harsh assessment of Hosni Mubarak's rule in Egyptian court Tuesday, accusing him of tyranny and corruption, and saying he devoted the last 10 years of his 30-year rule to ensuring his son Gamal would succeed him. The session was the first of three days in which the prosecution will state its case against Mubarak, who could face the death penalty if convicted of complicity in the deaths of more than 800 protesters last year. (AP)

Hearsay

"Nobody eats at the global level. You eat in the restaurant, in the cantina, at your house. That's where you need to provide those answers."

— **JOSE GRAZIANO DA SILVA,** THE NEW CHIEF OF THE U.N. FOOD AGENCY, ON TUESDAY DISCUSSING HIS TOP PRIORITY, WHICH IS MAKING GOOD ON THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION'S MANDATE: ERADICATE WORLD HUNGER.

Fury in Nigeria Soars With Fuel Prices

SUNDAY ALAMBA/AP

A PROTESTER SHOUTS OUT on Tuesday in Lagos, Nigeria, against the end of a subsidy program that had kept the country's fuel costs down for more than two decades. Demonstrators lit fires on roads after the price of gas, at least $3.50 per gallon, more than doubled Sunday's price of $1.70 per gallon.

Cache-ing In: Hackers claiming to be Saudis posted the credit card information of thousands of Israelis on the Internet on Tuesday, credit card companies said. They claimed to have compromised 400,000 credit-card holders, but Israel's central bank said only about 15,000 active cards were affected. The Israeli Ynet news website said the hackers, identifying themselves as Group-XP, called the cyberattack a "gift to the world for the New Year." (AP)

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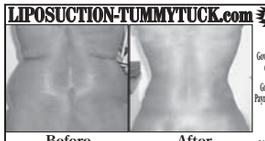
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Local

In Brief

WASHINGTON

Chavous Pleads Not Guilty To Solicitation Charge

Chavous

D.C. Council candidate Kevin B. Chavous pleaded not guilty Monday to a misdemeanor charge of soliciting prostitution, setting up a trial in the coming months. Chavous, who has remained mum about his Dec. 16 arrest even as he continues his campaign, declined to discuss any specifics about the incident after entering his plea. (THE WASHINGTON POST)

RICHMOND, VA.

Bolling to Be Tie-Breaker In Most Va. Senate Votes

Virginia Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling says he'll cast a tie-breaking vote in the state Senate in the upcoming session except in certain cases. Bolling on Tuesday issued a memo outlining his interpretation of his voting powers based on the state constitution and previous legal opinions. The Republican will preside over the 40-member Senate that is evenly divided between political parties. However, he believes he cannot vote on final passage of bills such as the budget, tax bills, constitutional amendments and the election of judges. (AP)

WASHINGTON

Capitol Police Holding Weight-Loss Contest

If you're a Capitol Police officer looking to lose weight, you may be in luck. The agency is holding a weight-loss challenge for officers and civilian employees. The competition, involving teams of four, started Tuesday after an initial weigh-in and runs until March 30. Whichever team loses the greatest percentage of weight wins the competition. (AP)

$13.2M

The face value of all the speed camera tickets issued by Montgomery County in 2011, according to AAA Mid-Atlantic. The county mailed out more than 300,000. (TWP)

D.C. Bill Would Require SAT, ACT

Brown hopes to raise graduation rate in D.C. public schools

Washington

In an attempt to keep D.C. public school students focused on their futures, D.C. Council Chairman Kwame R. Brown, a Democrat, is sponsoring a bill that requires all students to take a standardized college admission test and then apply to attend at least one college or post-secondary institution.

Under the legislation, which Brown will introduce at Wednesday's council meeting, all 70,000 students who attend D.C. public and charter schools will have to take either the SAT or the ACT test before graduating from high school. The bill would also require all high school students to apply to "at least one post-secondary institution," even if they do not plan on continuing their education.

"It's clear, when you look at jobs available in the District, many require a minimum of a college degree," said Brown, who also oversees education issues for the council. "The idea is to increase graduation rates and get more young folks who want to go college, college-ready."

On Monday, Brown fielded numerous questions from reporters about how the legislation would work, including whether financial assistance would be available to students who could not afford to pay for college applications or SAT and ACT fees.

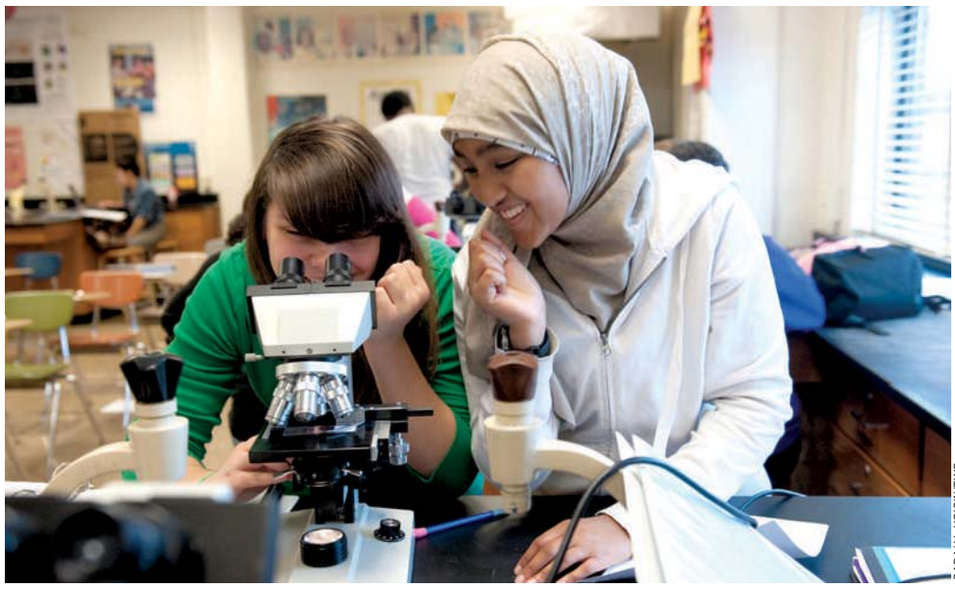
Brown said the bill would be refined as it works its way through the legislative process, but that the city would most likely make sure poor students have a way to meet the requirements.

Brown said it's imperative that D.C. public schools, with a drop-out rate of 43 percent, standardize how students view post-secondary education. TIM CRAIG (THE WASHINGTON POST)

Meanwhile ...

A federal judge has unsealed an order that directs a D.C. council member to pay back his outstanding student loan debt. Attorneys for Council member Harry Thomas Jr. had tried to keep the order under seal, arguing that it would hurt his reputation as he faces other legal problems. Thomas is the subject of a federal probe for allegedly diverting more than $300,000 in city funds for personal use. FBI and IRS agents raided his house last month. (AP)

washingtonpost.com



SARAH L. VOISIN/TWP

ALYSSA DENIKOS, LEFT, AND NEJAAT IBRAHIM look at blood smears under a microscope in a Principles of Biomedical Science class at Wheaton High School in Maryland, where many students are part of magnet programs that let them go to schools beyond neighborhood boundaries. Civil rights advocates are concerned that the diversity goals embedded in the original school choice movement—and the academic benefits that go along with them—are being left out. | **postlocal.com**

Suit Says Black Colleges Have Disadvantage

Baltimore

Opening statements have begun in a federal lawsuit alleging that state policies that can be traced to segregation hurt Maryland's historically black state colleges and universities. The bench trial began Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Baltimore.

The Coalition for Equity and Excellence in Maryland Higher Education alleges that practices carried over from the days of segregation at the state's higher education commission put historically black schools at a competitive disadvantage. The coalition says there is unnecessary duplication of specialized programs offered at historically black schools. (AP)

The Lotteries

Tuesday, Jan. 3

Maryland

Mid-day Pick 3	3-5-6
Evening Pick 3 (Mon.)	1-4-8
Mid-day Pick 4	0-4-1-1
Evening Pick 4 (Mon.)	3-2-0-8
Match 5 (Mon.)	3-5-22-23-26 (37)

District

Mid-day Lucky Numbers	0-1-4
Evening Lucky Numbers (Mon.)	1-0-5
Mid-day DC 4	4-0-9-1
Evening DC 4 (Mon.)	9-8-0-9
Mid-day D.C. Five	3-7-5-8-7
Evening D.C. Five (Mon.)	2-4-6-7-3

Virginia

Mid-day Pick 3	6-2-0
Evening Pick 3 (Mon.)	7-2-3
Mid-day Pick 4	3-9-6-3
Evening Pick 4 (Mon.)	9-1-0-1
Mid-day Cash 5 (Tues.)	6-7-8-9-23
Evening Cash 5 (Mon.)	9-12-17-19-33

All winning numbers are official only when validated at a claims location. Drawings that occur after Express' deadline will be published two days later.

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Riders See Changes to SmarTrip

Metro's new benefits system may confuse you, so here's a guide

Transportation

With the start of a new month and a new year, some Metro riders are doing a double take when they look at the dollar figure displayed on the digital readout at the fare gates.

What many are seeing is the combined effect of changes in the transit benefits and the effort by benefits administrators to comply with a long-standing IRS rule.

What they're not seeing: The Metro fares didn't increase. The readout at the fare gate may in some cases show riders a much different number than what they saw the last time they used their SmarTrip cards. But that wasn't the result of Metro's taking more money off the cards.

Transit Benefit

Congress didn't extend the temporary cap of $230 a month on tax-exempt transit benefits included in the federal stimulus bill. So as soon as 2012 began, the benefit limit shrank to $125 a month.

That affected people in different ways, depending on whether they receive a direct transit subsidy, as many federal employees do, or they just tell their personnel offices to assign a certain amount of their paychecks for tax-exempt transit commuting, as many private employees do.

BILL O'LEARY/TWP

On Monday, the amount you see when you swipe your SmarTrip card changed.

Auto-Load

This is another train that's been coming down the track for transit benefits users. SmarTrip has gotten somewhat smarter and is now able to load benefits directly onto the cards at the fare gates. So to add the value of the benefits to a card, you don't have to wait in line at the vending machines each month.

SmarTrip Purses

There's a third element at work combining the technology upgrade and IRS rules. The technology is new; the rule isn't. It's taken Metro and the transit benefits program a long time to bring the two together.

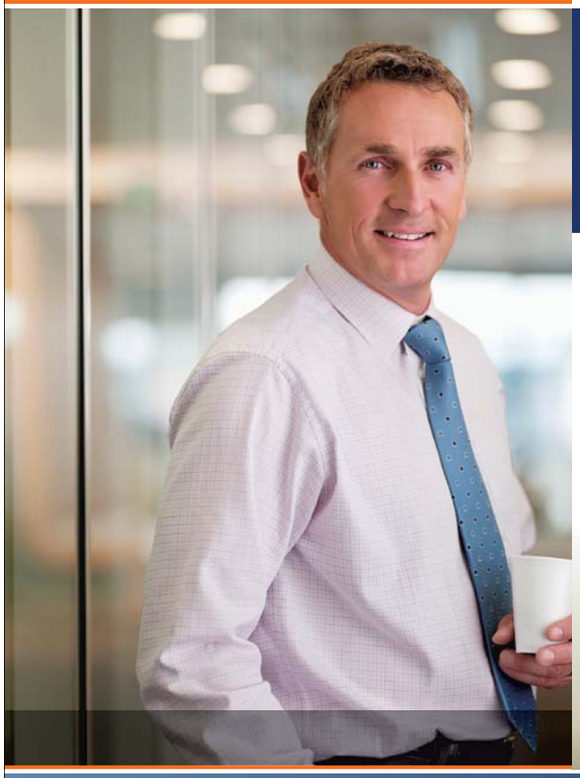
The IRS wanted a better way of tracking how people use the tax benefits and subsidies so that public money goes for the intended purposes.

How It Spends

Your commuting money is divided three ways: a transit-riding benefit, a parking benefit and the cash of your own that you added. The transit riding benefit is the amount up to $125 that can be used to ride Metrorail, Metrobus and many suburban transit systems. The parking benefit is the amount up to $240 that can be used for Metro parking. When you tap your card at a fare gate or at a bus fare box, you see the amount of your transit benefit. When you use the card to exit a Metro parking area, you see the parking benefit displayed.

(THE WASHINGTON POST)

UVa Online



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Cover Story

An Avalanche of Ads

Laden with cash, super PACs set the tone as primary season takes off

Washington

Look no further than Iowa to understand the impact of a Supreme Court ruling that opened the floodgates to outside money in American politics — and to get a glimpse of what's in store for the race between President Obama and the eventual Republican nominee.

Independent groups called super political action committees have spent millions on television ads and mailings to boost their favored candidates in Iowa and maim those candidates' rivals, dramatically influencing what's been a remarkably fluid race for the GOP presidential nomination.

The groups have ramped up spending just as the primary season is hitting full force. Some have done the campaigns' bidding by running attack ads on rivals. Others have bolstered candidates who had been running on financial fumes.

The trend will hardly be unique to Iowa. Political operatives and campaign-finance watchdogs say the 2012 election — projected to be among the costliest ever — will face an onslaught of ads by powerful interests that will have an extraordinary say in who might next occupy the Oval Office.

With more than 300 days to go before the general election, the measures of influence are legion: Some TV ads assail Newt Gingrich for "collecting big bucks" from mortgage lender Freddie Mac, and others praise Mitt Romney for "turning around" dozens of companies. One heralded Rick Santorum as a "courageous reformer with results" while another credited Rick Perry for his outside-the-Beltway experience.

Meanwhile, the candidates didn't have to spend a dime of their own money for any of those ads.

The super PACs are a product of the 2010 Citizens United ruling by the Supreme Court, which removed restrictions on corporate and union spending in elections, and for their part, super PAC operatives make no apologies for what they say is legally protected free speech.

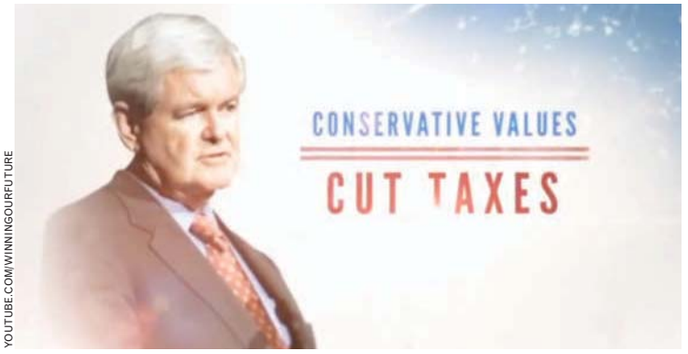
Some GOP-leaning super PACs say that their ads contribute to a marketplace of ideas. Democrats say they have to push back forcefully.

They have been up-front about their motives: Groups like the Karl Rove-backed American Crossroads have promised to spend tens of millions in the general election to defeat Obama. On the other side of the aisle, former Obama aide Bill Burton runs the super PAC Priorities USA Action, joining a handful of similar Democratic-oriented super groups.

Looking ahead past the Iowa caucuses, the groups' impact is set to remain strong: Make Us Great Again, a super PAC that supports Perry's candidacy, recently booked at least $130,000 for TV spots for this week in South Carolina, which holds its critical primary on Jan. 21. At the time, Perry's campaign had yet to spend a dollar on similar ads. JACK GILLUM (AP)

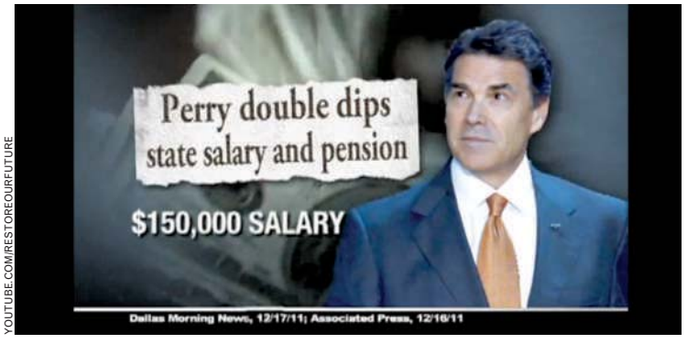
Primary Pushers

By law, presidential campaigns can raise at most $5,000 total from an individual donor. But super PACs can solicit and spend unlimited money, and some employ affiliated groups whose donors are allowed to remain anonymous. The super PACs can't coordinate with candidates, but many are staffed by longtime supporters of the candidates. Here's a look at some of the super PACs behind the GOP hopefuls:



YOUTUBE.COM/WINNINGOURFUTURE

Winning Our Future
The Newt Gingrich-backing super PAC footed the bill in Iowa for more than $191,000 in ads last week supporting Gingrich. The former House speaker's campaign spent only a fifth of that amount during the same period.



YOUTUBE.COM/RESTOREOURFUTURE

Restore Our Future
Since Christmas Day, the Mitt Romney-leaning group spent nearly $130,000 on direct-mail ads and at least $1.2 million on ads supporting the former Massachusetts governor while also hammering Gov. Rick Perry, federal data show.

YOUTUBE.COM/ENDORSELIBERTY

Endorse Liberty
The super PAC supporting Texas Rep. Ron Paul put much of its money into the Web and social media. It spent at least $100,000 on Google's AdWords service and about $40,000 on Facebook commercials during the same period. (AP)

$1.2M **The combined amount spent** by such groups as the Mitt Romney-leaning super PAC Restore Our Future and the Rick Perry-leaning Make Us Great Again on television ads in Iowa in just one week before Tuesday's caucuses — a sum greater than what the candidates paid out themselves. (AP)

Caucus Coverage

The results of Tuesday's Iowa caucuses were unavailable at Express' deadline. Find coverage at washingtonpost.com.

Freshman of the Boards

Porter leads the team on the glass heading into Marquette game

Hoyas Men's Hoops

The Georgetown Hoyas of 2011-12 have been defined mostly by one thing: length. And what does the team's next opponent — No. 20 Marquette, a team missing its tallest player — struggle with the most? Length.

7 P.M. Wed. | ESPNU

Chris Otule, the Golden Eagles' 6-foot-11 center, has been out six games since an ACL injury he suffered two minutes into the team's game against Washington Dec. 6. For the remaining nonconference games in his absence, Marquette's field goal percentage dropped from 56.3 percent to 45.7 percent, and opponents have scored more without Otule to hold them back.

When the Golden Eagles (12-2) are low, they are low. On Dec. 29, their shooting was dry for almost nine minutes as Vanderbilt went on a 31-4 run after Davante Gardner's opening basket. Ten days before, the Golden Eagles shot 36.2 percent against LSU, their season low at the time. They did even worse against Vanderbilt, shooting 32.2 percent.

Gardner played terribly against Vanderbilt, racking up two points, two rebounds and three fouls, but he bounced back — as did the rest of the team — in their first conference game against Villanova. Top scorer Darius Johnson-Odom recorded 24 points, six rebounds and three assists in the game against Villanova, and he averages 17.9 points, 3.6 rebounds and 2.8 assists per game this season.

LUIS M. ALVAREZ/AP

Georgetown's Otto Porter passes against American on Dec. 17 at Verizon Center. The freshman leads the team in rebounds.

MARC SEROTA/GETTY IMAGES

Marquette's Darius Johnson-Odom reacts after a dunk Sunday against Villanova.

> **"Rebounding is always very important. When we rebound, I think we're going to be a pretty decent team."**
>
> — **OTTO PORTER,** HOYAS FRESHMAN AVERAGING 8.5 POINTS PER GAME.

Georgetown coach John Thompson III said he knows Johnson-Odom will make things tough for the Hoyas. "He plays at a high level at both ends of the floor," Thompson said. "From an offensive perspective, he can shoot, so protect the three-point line and play him like a shooter. At the same time, he can get to the basket probably as good as anybody we've played this year. And then at the defensive end, he takes pride in guarding his guy. As it relates to both ends of the court — [he's] a top-tier player."

The Hoyas (12-1) have a weapon of their own. Freshman Otto Porter has played lights-out in the first two conference games this season. He is averaging 6.6 rebounds per game — first on the team — including a team-high 12-rebound outing against Providence on Saturday, to go along with six points, a block and a steal. The forward has 26 rebounds in the past two contests.

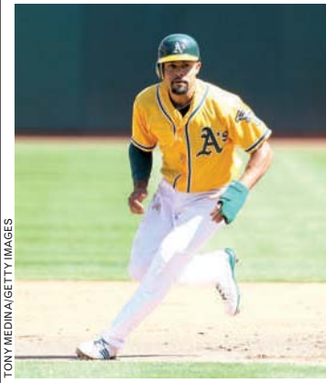
"When we rebound, I think we're going to be a pretty decent team," Porter said.

"Otto made the plays that you have to make to win games," Thompson said Saturday. "All the little things that go into winning, he's been very good at those things."

KRYSTINA LUCIDO

Super Saturday: The Associated Press and the NFL will announce the annual league awards, including Most Valuable Player, in a two-hour prime-time special, "NFL Honors," to air on NBC on Super Bowl eve, Feb. 4. All seven AP NFL awards will be presented from 9 to 11 p.m. EST live from the Murat Theater in Indianapolis during a show hosted by "30 Rock" star Alec Baldwin. The show will feature a live performance by Lenny Kravitz. (AP)

In Brief



TONY MEDINA/GETTY IMAGES

Free-agent center fielder Coco Crisp agreed to a new contract with the A's.

PRO BASEBALL

Sources Say Crisp to Stay With Oakland in 2012

A person with knowledge of the negotiations says free agent center fielder Coco Crisp has agreed to a two-year deal to return to the Oakland Athletics. ESPN was first to report Tuesday that Crisp, who had hoped to keep playing on the West Coast, would stay put with the A's. (AP)

SOCCER

Beckham to Stay in L.A.

David Beckham is set to stay with the Los Angeles Galaxy after turning down a chance to join Paris Saint-Germain, the French club said Tuesday. After weeks of negotiations with PSG, the 36-year-old midfielder and former England captain decided he doesn't want to move his family from the United States. "David Beckham is not coming," PSG President Nasser al-Khelaifi said at the Qatar Open tennis tournament. (AP)

PRO FOOTBALL

Ravens Cut K Graham

The Baltimore Ravens have cut placekicker Shayne Graham. He has been replaced on the roster Tuesday by rookie center-guard Justin Boren, a former Michigan player promoted from the practice squad. Graham became expendable once regular kicker Billy Cundiff returned from a left calf injury and kicked a 42-yard field goal Sunday during a 24-16 win over the Cincinnati Bengals. (AP)

Sports

More Questions in Indy

After dumping GM, future of franchise is in limbo before draft

Pro Football

The Indianapolis Colts' off-season was already full of questions.

Monday's firing of Bill and Chris Polian will only add to the list.

Jim Caldwell and the assistant coaches are working in limbo, waiting to see whether they'll be retained. The status of Peyton Manning remains cloudy.

It's unlikely any decisions about free agents will be made until a new general manager is hired, and owner Jim Irsay acknowledged Monday there is no timeline for a decision on his new hire.

With fans clamoring for changes after a stunning 2-14 collapse, just two years after winning an AFC title, Irsay didn't hesitate to shake up his front office.

Now Irsay intends to take his time finding a replacement, a delay that could complicate all those other choices.

Whoever replaces Polian will face an abundance of decisions in a major rebuilding effort.

MARC SEROTA/GETTY IMAGES

Bill Polian, left, and Jim Irsay chat at the Colts' game against the Buccaneers Oct. 3.

"I'm grateful for all the support the fans have shown us in good times and bad. Indianapolis has been a wonderful place to live and work."

— **BILL POLIAN,** FORMER COLTS GENERAL MANAGER, WHO WAS FIRED MONDAY.

Manning never played after having surgery in September, when doctors fused two vertebrae to fix a damaged nerve that was causing weakness in his throwing arm.

He did, however, start throwing to teammates in mid-December and received good reviews from both Bill Polian, who was watching, and running back Joseph Addai, who was catching the passes. Doctors familiar with the procedure who did not treat Manning say he should return to a high level of play now that the fusion has healed.

If he is healthy, Irsay has promised to bring back Manning regardless of the $28 million bonus he is owed in March, potentially putting two franchise quarterbacks — Manning and likely No. 1 pick Andrew Luck of Stanford on the same roster.

"I think I can coexist with any player I've ever played with," Manning said Sunday. "I think I've always been a good teammate in that way."

If Manning returns, Irsay might be more likely to bring back former Pro Bowlers Robert Mathis, Jeff Saturday and Reggie Wayne, all of whom are now in their 30s, and keep other key high-priced cogs in the Colts' success. (AP)

Around the League

Back in the Saddle? A person familiar with the Miami Dolphins' coaching search says former Titans head coach Jeff Fisher is interviewing for the job. The person confirmed the interview to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the Dolphins hadn't commented. (AP)

Enough Is Enough Bears general manager Jerry Angelo has been fired after a team collapse marked by injuries to Jay Cutler and Matt Forte, and a drug scandal involving receiver Sam Hurd. Tuesday's announcement ends Angelo's 11-year reign in Chicago. (AP)

Nice to Know You The St. Louis Rams fired coach Steve Spagnuolo and general manager Billy Devaney on Monday, a day after the team wrapped up a 2-14 season tied for the NFL's worst. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers fired head coach Raheem Morris on Monday after he posted a 17-31 record over three years, including a 10-game losing streak to end the current season. (AP)

Sports

Man City Punches Out Liverpool

PAUL ELLIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

MANCHESTER CITY GOALIE Joe Hart makes a save during the team's Barclay's English Premier League 3-0 win against Liverpool on Monday. With the win, Man City stayed atop the league and Liverpool remained in fifth place.

TV Lineup

WIZARDS (7 P.M., MASN) The team looks to get its first win of the season against the Magic on the road.

HOYAS (7 P.M., ESPNU) Their tough Big East schedule rolls on with a home tilt against No. 20 Marquette.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL (8:30 P.M., ESPN) West Virginia and Clemson square off in the Orange Bowl in Miami.

COLLEGE HOOPS (7 P.M., ESPN2) No. 3 Duke travels to Philadelphia to play Temple.

Sick, Hurt Vesely Feeling Better

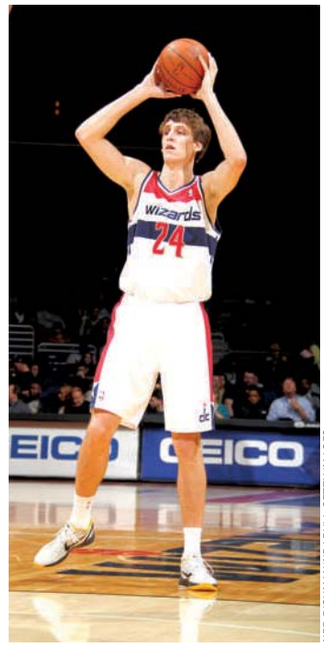
The Wizards

Jan Vesely was on the court at TD Garden on Monday in a T-shirt and shorts, doing some non-contact drills and leg exercises with resistance bands as head athletic trainer Eric Waters monitored him.

As he walked off the court, signing autographs for fans before heading to the locker room, Vesely said he feels "better."

Vesely had a shot in his injured right hip last week, and coach Flip Saunders said he would be evaluated when the team arrives in Orlando. "Vesely's making progress," Saunders said. "Hopefully, he can do some active things on Wednesday, and if he can, he might be able to progress enough to play Friday" against New York.

Vesely, the sixth pick in last June's draft, has yet to make his NBA debut after developing some discomfort in his hip on the last day of training camp. He played in the preseason opener against Philadelphia, scoring seven points off the bench, but has been limited since.



NED DISHMAN/NBAE VIA GETTY IMAGES

The Wizards' Jan Vesely was out with flu symptoms after developing a hip injury.

Vesely didn't travel with the Wizards for the first two road games last week after developing the flu, but he actually credited the illness for allowing him to rest and heal. "I think maybe it helped a little bit. I rest like two days. I didn't do anything. Everything slowed down and I feel better," Vesely said.

But Vesely has had a difficult time sitting out as the Wizards (0-5) have opened the season as the NBA's only winless team.

"It's tough to sit on the bench and see the players; they are playing, and they are playing bad," Vesely said. "Of course, I want to try to help the team." MICHAEL LEE (THE WASHINGTON POST)

Another Classic: When the Capitals committed to playing in the 2011 NHL Winter Classic in Pittsburgh, it was reported that Ted Leonsis and the organization received a promise from the league that the District would get to host the marquee event in the future. The team owner wrote on his blog, "Ted's Take," that the event is indeed bound for Washington eventually; it just won't be in 2013. (THE WASHINGTON POST)

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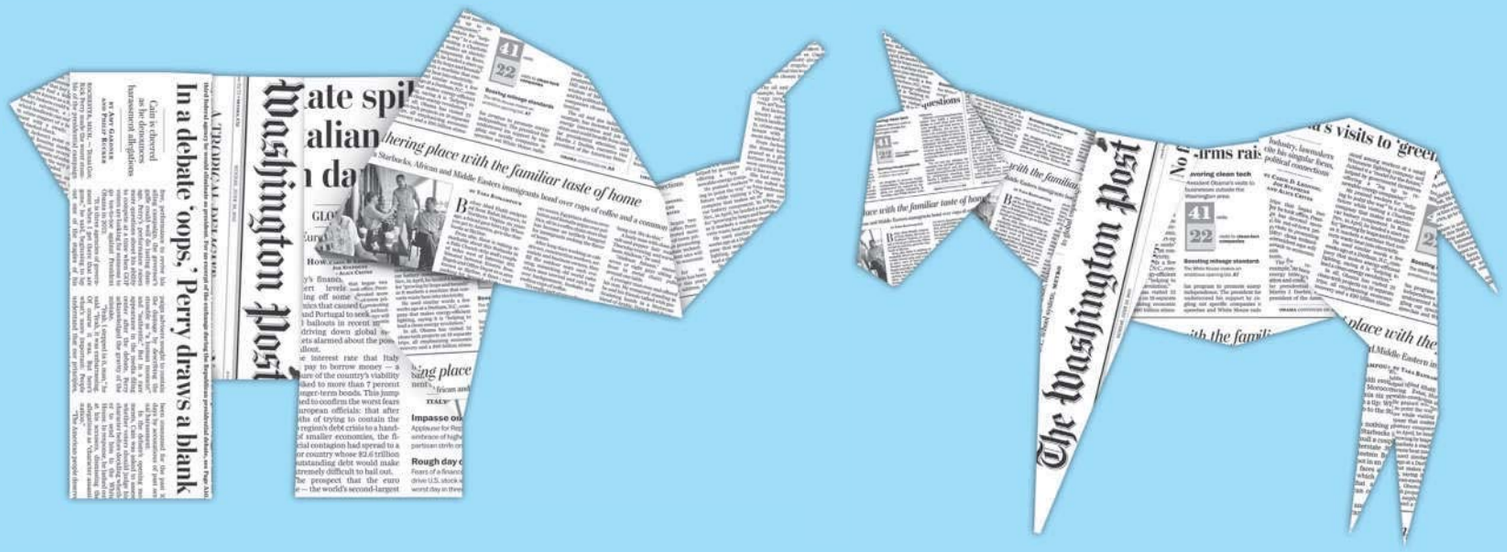

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lookout

Digital Drama
Nadya Suleman's Web accounts are shuttered by her ex-manager **27**

Inside Jokes

FUSE

Street Nonsense

Comedian Billy Eichner is a game show host for the Twitter generation. On "Funny or Die's Billy on the Street," (Fuse, Thursdays, 11 p.m.), the Upright Citizens Brigade veteran runs around New York City and accosts people with inane questions about pop culture — many of which don't have a right or wrong answer.

By Rudi Greenberg

Example: "True or false? Zac Efron looks like he wants to be molested by an older person." Give a good answer, get a dollar; give a bad one and Eichner insults you before storming off. It all happens so fast that most contestants don't have a clue what's happening until it's over.

Pack in dozens of these rapid-fire interactions, along with slightly longer trivia segments ("Quizzed in the Face," "Are You Smarter Than a Gay 5th Grader?"), and you have a game show built for short attention spans.

It's Eichner who makes the show work. His quick wit is awe-inspiring, and he has the smug, sarcastic jerk act down pat. Yet he remains immensely likable, cheering contestants on before pushing them out of his way when he gets annoyed.

"Billy on the Street" isn't about who wins or loses — you'll be too busy rolling on the floor to care.

@ Watch a "Billy on the Street" preview at **Funnyordie.com/billyonthestreet.**

ISTOCKPHOTO/ EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

Collective Complaints

The Twitter account 'White Girl Problems' offers equal parts therapy and humor

Online

Ever since "White Girl Problems" launched on Twitter more than a year ago, it popularized a simple formula: complaint, hashtag, problem. The kvetching is catching. A whole online community has sprung up to vent. Now there's @JewBoyProblems, @PostGradProblems and @HipsterProblems, to name a few. Hyperion is releasing a book Jan. 31 — "White Girl Problems" ($13.99) — and there have been talks with television executives about developing a series.

The #problems hashtag is equal parts group therapy and stand-up comedy.

"Everybody has problems," says David Oliver Cohen, 31, an author of the popular "White Girl Problems" account. "Twitter has given people a catharsis to let go of them and sort of move forward."

Jillian Leff used it the night before she underwent minor surgery. The 22-year-old from Toms River, N.J., tweeted: "Surgery tomorrow. The sad part? The only thing I'm concerned about is not being able to go to the gym for 2 wks. #whitegirlproblems."

Cohen and his brother Tanner, 24 — who grew up in Annapolis, Md., and live in New York — and their friend Lara Schoenhals, 27 — an Oklahoma City native living in Los Angeles — created the account over drinks one night in Los Angeles. It has gained more than 545,000 followers. They tweet as a misguided, spoiled, 20-something socialite. They gave her a name (Babe Walker), a blog and a memoir. They're poking fun at the girl, who "thinks everything in her life is an issue," David Cohen says.

Like changing her hairstyle: "It is so difficult to transition back into being a brunette. #whitegirlproblems."

Or maintaining a diet: "Does anyone remember what pizza tastes like? #whitegirlproblems."

Her followers, like Leff, often respond with their own iterations of a "white girl problem."

The reason the White Girl Problems account is so popular, its authors say, is that many of the tweets ring true even if they are over the top. "There's a little bit of mocking involved," Schoenhals says, but "in the spectrum of our character, they are real problems in her world."

SCOTT EIDLER (THE WASHINGTON POST)

"Everybody has problems. Twitter has given people a catharsis to let go of them and sort of move forward."

— **DAVID OLIVER COHEN,** ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF "WHITE GIRL PROBLEMS."

lookout entertainment

From left: Bear in Heaven's Joe Stickney, Jon Philpot and Adam Wills time stretched their new album online.

SHAWN BRACKBILL

Four Months Later

Bear in Heaven bends and stretches time with an album stream

Music

On Dec. 12, the experimental New York rock group Bear in Heaven began streaming its coming album on Bearinheaven.com, but it'll take listeners awhile to get to the end. That's because the band used digital software to stretch its 44-minute work into a sprawling, ambient blur that will take nearly four months to play from start to finish.

Think of it as the audio inverse of time-lapse photography. Or like reading a novel in which only one letter is printed on each page. It's called time stretching, and it's been one of the most interesting musical memes on YouTube this year.

The most famous example went viral in 2010, when a Florida DJ, Nick Pittsinger, used a new software program called PaulStretch to transform Justin Bieber's bubblegum hit "U Smile" into a dreamy, unrecognizable, 30-plus-minute whoooooooosh — the kind of music you might hear when you're flopped out on a massage table.

Since then, plenty of music has been stretched: megahits from bona-fide pop stars (Lady Gaga, Justin Timberlake), viral baubles from Internet punching bags (Rebecca Black, Rick Astley), iconic movie and TV themes ("Jaws," "The Simpsons") and more.

400K%

The approximate amount, using time stretching, that the online stream of Bear in Heaven's new album is slowed down by, according to Pitchfork.

"It takes a high-energy song and makes it calm and peaceful, which I think has a novelty," says Don Caldwell, who writes about Web phenomena for the site Know Your Meme.

Time stretching feels like a distant cousin to "screwed" remixes in hip-hop, the Houston-born trend of slowing music down so that rappers' voices end up somewhere between Barry White and Cookie Monster.

But time stretching is different. It slows the music down — or pulls it apart like taffy, really — without affecting the pitch. So instead of singing in Satan's baritone, Bieber sounds like a beatific choir of digital cherubs.

Adam Wills, the guitarist for Bear in Heaven, says his band listened to the stretched version of Bieber's "U Smile" in its tour van plenty last year. But the group's collective interest in time stretching dates to 2002, when members first heard Scandinavian sound artist Leif Inge's "9 Beet Stretch," a recording that, with the help of software developers, lengthened Beethoven's Ninth to 24 hours.

It turns out the guy who invented PaulStretch, Paul Nasca, was inspired by the same piece. He came up with the idea two years ago after hearing "9 Beet Stretch" online.

Time stretching offers a moment of tranquility.

As Bear in Heaven stretches its album over the coming months, Wills sees the project as half art, half joke. "It's kind of a wild thing to finish a record and wait three or four months before it can be released," he says. "So this is a fun way of saying, 'Here's the music.'"

Time stretching offers a moment of tranquility. It asks us to slow down as we dash through the bandwidth in a never-ending Google search for life's great answers. It feels like a grand meme-aphor for the extension of human life itself.

"Yeah," Wills says. "It's also hilarious." CHRIS RICHARDS (THE WASHINGTON POST)

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TIM CASTLEN

1 Cello Again

Amy Domingues was playing cello in rock bands way before it was cool. Her indie rock resume is impeccable, including cello cameos on albums by Fugazi, the Dead Meadow and Ted Leo. Her side project, the chamber pop duo Garland of Hours, will perform at the Black Cat tonight to celebrate its latest album, "Lucidia." ***Black Cat, 1811 14th St. NW; 8 p.m., $8; 202-667-7960, Blackcatdc.com. (U St.-Cardozo)***

2 You've Got Melt

The Gaylord Hotel's Ice! exhibit of frozen carvings is almost cruel, considering our unseasonably warm and snowless Christmas. The theme of this year's ice extravaganza is the animated film "Madagascar" and features carvings of jungle animals. Madagascar the country rarely sees any snowfall outside of one mountain range. ***Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center, 201 Waterfront St., National Harbor, Md.; through Jan. 8, $19-$35; 877-628-5427, Gaylordhotels.com.***

3 South American Way

Brazilian jazz is so 2011. Sofia Rei, Argentine jazz diva, melds traditional South American music with tango rhythms, jazz orchestration and tongue-twisting lyrics to create an impressive but confusing hybrid style. Though she clearly loves classic rhythms and big band styles, the songs are mostly originals. ***Kennedy Center, 2700 F St. NW; 6 p.m., free; 202-467-4600, Kennedy-center.org. (Foggy Bottom)***

TV tonight lookout

Do the Double Take

On 'I Get That a Lot,' celebrities pretend to work ordinary jobs

Reality

CBS 8:00

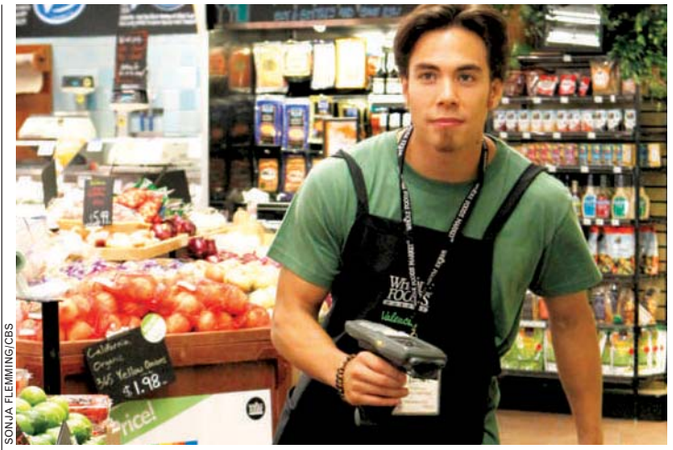
Television has become a losing battle between the fake and the real. What's the use of concocting a scripted comedy and drama when folks would just as soon watch "Swamp Loggers"? Our 10-year reality TV binge has robbed so many would-be actors of their chance to become famous that our few remaining celebrities have banded together to retaliate by pretending to be "real" people.

The result is the odd hybrid "I Get That a Lot," a "Candid Camera"-style series in which well-known folks slum as regular wage earners. When a normal person comes up to a celebrated face (and body) pretending to toil behind the counter at Victoria's Secret, she inquires, "Aren't you Pamela Anderson?" At this point, the star of "Barb Wire" denies her own identity, much to the stranger's confusion and consternation.

If you find this hilarious, stick around to watch Pauley Perrette ("NCIS") try her hand at dog grooming; talk show host Jerry Springer work at a deli; Olympian Apolo Ohno bag groceries at an upscale supermarket; Ty Pennington ("Extreme Makeover: Home Edition") sell hardware; and Dr. Drew Pinsky ("Celebrity Rehab") peddle glasses at a chain outlet.

For all of their new vocations, the hardest acting "job" performed here is straddling the line between identifying with working stiffs and condescending to ordinary folk.

KEVIN MCDONOUGH (UNIVERSAL UCLICK)



SONJA FLEMING/CBS

Apolo Ohno skates around as a Whole Foods employee on CBS' "I Get That a Lot."

Best Bets

FOX 9:00

Mobbed Howie Mandel brings a game show host's sensibilities to this special, in which he works with people who want to put together flash mobs. Here, the folks putting them on have something to say with their mob scenes, such as, "Will you marry me?"

PBS 9:00

NOVA "Deadliest Volcanoes" takes a look at how scientists are attempting to discover how likely volcanoes are to erupt, when the eruptions might happen and how deadly they could prove to be.

A&E 10:00

Dog the Bounty Hunter As a new season opens, Duane "Dog" Chapman and his family are feeling the strain of their high-stress work. Lyssa has an encounter with the law after a night of drinking, while Dog and Beth clash with Duane Lee over his commitment to the business.

ABC 10:00

Revenge Daniel's plans to enjoy his birthday with family and friends are interrupted by an unwelcome guest. Charlotte (Christa B. Allen) is caught in the middle of Conrad and Victoria's (Madeleine Stowe, shown) marital strife. Emily's (Emily VanCamp) revenge plan begins to unravel. (TRIBUNE MEDIA)

Comedy

What Not to Wear

When Penny starts dating Dave's therapist on "Happy Endings" (9:31 p.m., ABC), Dave reacts strangely. Jane and Max (Adam Pally, below) have a competition to see who can wear an ugly outfit longer, with the winner taking possession of a garment they both want. Brad (Damon Wayans Jr.) and Alex discover that they both enjoy romantic comedies. (TM)

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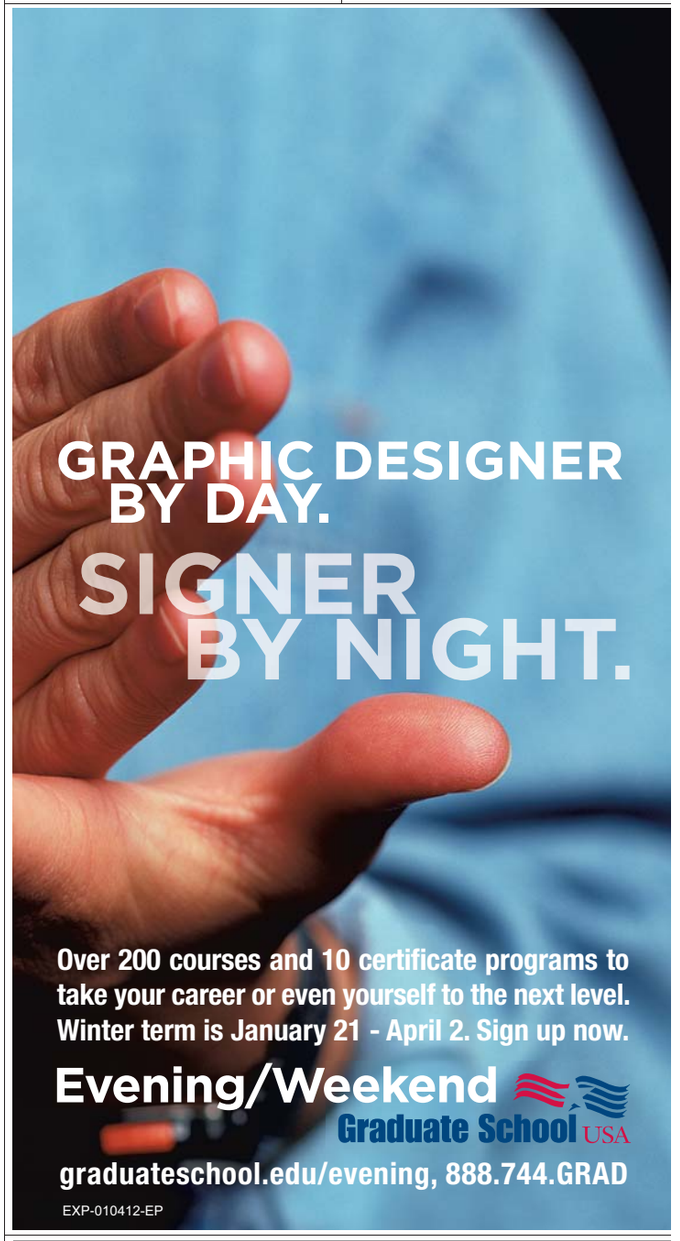

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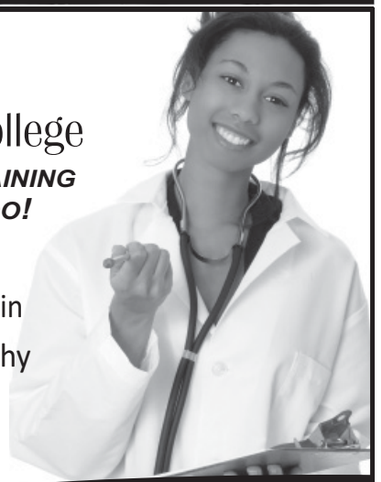

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Blog Log

"There's a new Steve Jobs action figure, but I'm waiting for the Steve4S so they work the bugs out and install SIRI."

—@BERIMBAUONE cracks a joke about the new doll, selling for $99, created by the toy company In Icons.

VIMEO.COM/DJDUKES

"Yes; even though it's been some 27 years since 'Rappin' Duke,' the 'white people turn urban-radio tropes into something more similar to what they might listen to, with hilarity possibly ensuing' tack is still guaranteed to hit pay dirt among certain subgroups of people who consider themselves both musical aesthetes and 'geeks.'"

—MAURA JOHNSTON AT BLOGS.VILLAGEVOICE.COM explains why the genre she describes as "White Person Cutely/Seriously Performing Urban-Radio Hit" ranks as No. 3 on her 11 Most Infuriating Songs of 2011 list.

"That brings the number of record stores within city limits to ... less than half a dozen? But while Smash!, Red Onion, Crooked Beat and Som are all great shops, they're also fairly boutique and mostly rock-focused. If you wanted pop, hip-hop, classical, jazz, Latin, African music or just about any other genre — and if you're the kind of person who still buys your music in person — you probably went to Melody."

—WASHINGTONCITYPAPER.COM/BLOGS/ARTSDESK laments the announcement Tuesday by Melody Records, on Connecticut Avenue, that it will be closing later this winter.

"Clearly, there's a question here of whether it's possible to be named Omar Little in Baltimore and not feel some sort of obligation to live up to it. You know, just like how 'The Wire' forced the whole city to start having drug problems and homicides."

—AVCLUB.COM reacts to news that a man named Omar Little Jr. was arrested in Baltimore on a gun charge. On the HBO drama "The Wire," Michael K. Williams, above, played a popular character with the same name.

"Starbucks raised the price of a small coffee by 10 cents. You can offset this by bringing your own mug. Also, it's just good creation care."

—@JOHNDYER offers a simple workaround for the price hike the coffee retailer instituted Tuesday in certain markets in the U.S., including Washington. Starbucks says milk and fuel costs forced the increase.

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FREE PARKING

Puzzles

Horoscope

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You may not be able to go with Plan A today simply because you haven't been given the tools you really need to work your magic.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) When you finish one thing today you'll be ready to move right on to the next — and there's no reason to pack up when you can work right there.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Even the most mundane messages are likely to contain some hidden meanings today — but don't start overanalyzing things.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Play the clown today at your own risk; if others do not take you seriously, you may be at a disadvantage when your circumstances change.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Seek out some shade today and enjoy some time out of the glare of scrutiny. You know well enough that you'll be a target again very soon.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Jump to conclusions and you'll only start making a fool out of yourself. Wait until all information is available before passing judgment.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) The dynamics between you and a friend may be tainted because someone is misinterpreting the other's temporary silence.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Trying something new isn't a solitary endeavor. You'll want to invite others to experiment with you; there's safety in numbers.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Your personal style may not be to everyone's taste, but who said you wanted to please everybody? You needn't change a thing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) You may find yourself yearning for something that you may never reclaim — but even in yearning you will find some value today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) The simple approach is your best bet today — though there are some who may claim you are merely taking the easy way out.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Once the lights are on, you'll be able to see what the veil of darkness hid — and this is more figurative than literal.

PostPoints DAILY CODE PL

Scrabble Grams

PAR SCORE 150-160, BEST SCORE 231

								RACK 1
E1	O1	U1	L1	L1	G2	B3		
								RACK 2
E1	I1	T1	T1	R1	R1	W4		
								RACK 3
A1	I1	Y4	Z10	C3	L1	R1	Double Word Score	
								RACK 4
A1	E1	I1	T1	B3	V4	R1	1st Letter Triple	

Yesterday's Solution

B3	O1	R1	S1	C3	H4	T1	RACK 1 =	64
M3	E1	M3	O1	I1	R1		RACK 2 =	10
A1	L1	C3	O1	H4	O1	L1	RACK 3 =	86
B3	E1	D2	R1	O1	L1	L1	RACK 4 =	61
PAR SCORE 145-155							TOTAL	221

FOUR RACK TOTAL _____

Make a 2-7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get a 50-point bonus. Blank tiles used as any letter have no point value. Scrabble is a trademark of Hasbro in the U.S. and Canada.

Sudoku

MEDIUM

7								6
	1	6		7		5	3	
		4				7		
	8		7		9		6	
			4	2	8			
	9		5		1		7	
		3				1		
	4	9		5		8	2	
5								4

Yesterday's Solution

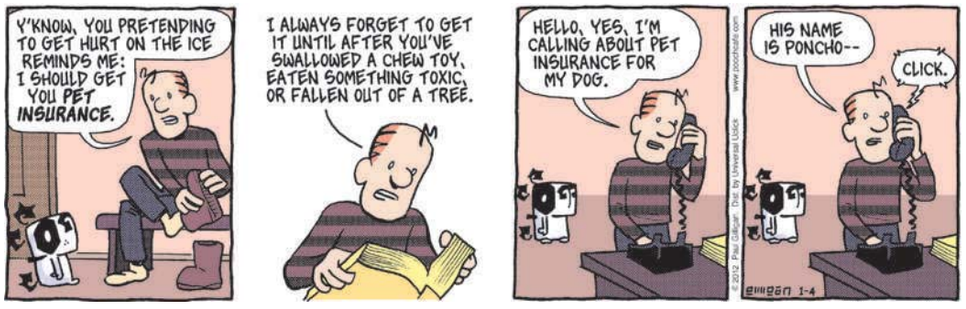
6	5	7	2	1	4	9	3	8
1	4	2	9	8	3	5	7	6
8	9	3	6	7	5	2	1	4
3	6	4	5	2	1	8	9	7
9	2	1	7	3	8	4	6	5
7	8	5	4	6	9	1	2	3
5	3	9	1	4	6	7	8	2
4	7	8	3	9	2	6	5	1
2	1	6	8	5	7	3	4	9

Need more Su|do|ku? Find another puzzle in the Comics section of The Post every Sunday and in the Style section Monday through Saturday.

© PUZZLES BY PAPPOCOM

Comics

POOCH CAFE | PAUL GILLIGAN



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE | STEPHAN PASTIS

Forecast

36 | 31

Today: Mostly cloudy and cold today. Partly cloudy tonight.

46 | 33

Tomorrow: Mostly sunny, breezy and milder tomorrow. Clear tomorrow night.

Looking Ahead

FRI	SAT	SUN
50 | 37	56 | 39	50 | 33

Sun and Moon
Sunrise today: 7:27 a.m.
Sunset today: 4:59 p.m.
Moonrise today: 1:20 p.m.
Moonset today: 3:14 a.m.

Almanac
Normal high: 43
Record high: 68
Normal low: 29
Record low: -6

FORECAST BY ACCUWEATHER.COM ©2012

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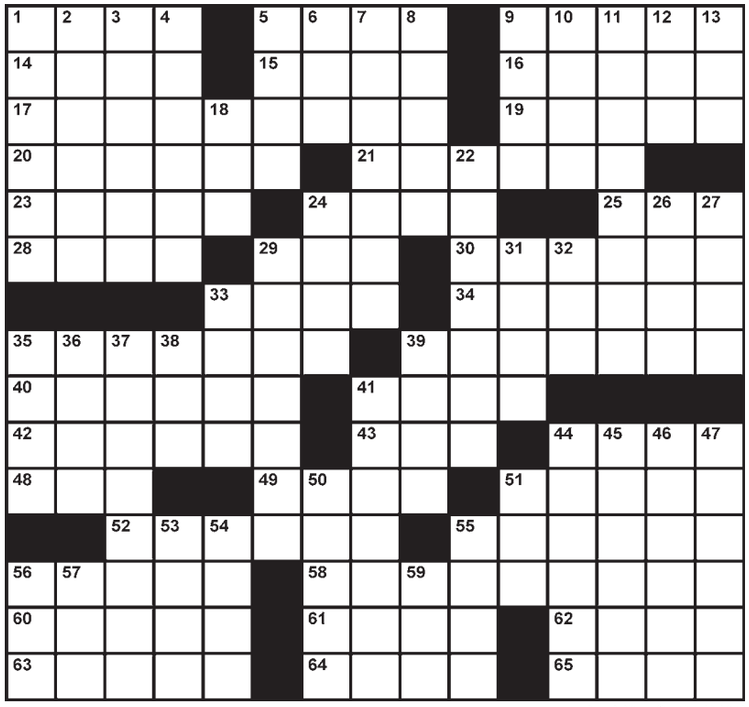
Puzzles

Crossword

CHECK MARX



EDITED BY TIMOTHY E. PARKER

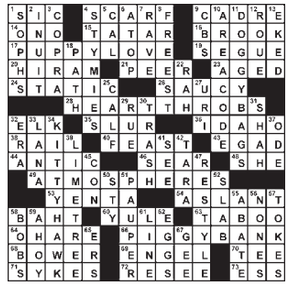
ACROSS

1 Mailing label word
5 Sheet music symbol
9 Conductors' platforms
14 Word with "dynamic" or "space"
15 Fun thing on a string
16 "Kiss the chef" garment
17 Mr. Trebek?
19 Microscopic
20 Pro Football Hall of Fame setting
21 Sister of Venus
23 Bar at Fort Knox
24 Romantic flower
25 Society-ball focus, for short
28 Arabian Peninsula port
29 "Wide" partner
30 In a wryly humorous way
33 Candle holder, perhaps
34 Down in the dumps
35 1996 also-ran
39 Outdated communications
40 Join the student body
41 Fossil fuel
42 It gets into hot water
43 Part of MOMA
44 A little lower?
48 Capp and Capone
49 Annapolis sch. for midshipmen
51 Hometown-related
52 Didn't hit, in blackjack
55 Safe havens
56 Platinum, for example
58 Sugary cereal scams?
60 Public face
61 Falco of "The Sopranos"
62 Ancient alphabetic character
63 Kind of cup
64 Wheelchair access
65 "___ Flux" (Charlize Theron movie)

DOWN

1 Sheet of connective tissue
2 Send back to a lower court
3 Vitamin C source
4 "When it rains, it pours" salt brand
5 Primary color in printing
6 "I'm giggling audibly," in email
7 Blight on the landscape
8 Sly animals
9 Uptown cracker topper
10 Break the seal on
11 Be phobic about a bagel topping?
12 Charged particle
13 "___ port in a storm"
18 Playpen occupant
22 Beef, but not pork
24 Croupier's tool
26 Otherwise
27 Parting words
29 Scapegoat
31 Make into a ball
32 Mispickel or cinnabar, e.g.
33 Popular soft-drink flavor
35 Alpha follower
36 Turow book
37 What trumpet players pay every April?
38 Driver's license info.
39 ___ Bora (Afghan region)
41 George Bernard Shaw comedy
44 Iran-___ affair
45 Pile up, as interest
46 Hispanic American, e.g.
47 Like the locks of Goldilocks
50 Passover meal
51 ___ an egg (fail publicly)
53 Tribe in the first "Survivor"
54 To the sheltered side
55 Move a foot?
56 Start for "day" or "term"
57 Brit. record label
59 Tire support

Yesterday's Solution



Today in History

1896 Utah is admitted as the 45th state.

1987 Sixteen people are killed when an Amtrak train heading from Washington, D.C., to Boston collides with Conrail locomotives that crossed into its path from a side track in Chase, Md.

2006 Nancy Pelosi is elected the first female speaker of the House.

express

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Founding Publisher — Christopher Ma, 1950-2011

People

'I WORKED IN FOOD SERVICE'

Mysterious Invocation Grants Instant Relatability

Rachel McAdams worked at McDonald's "for a good three years," she told Glamour in a new interview. "I was not a great employee; I broke the orange juice machine one day." She told the magazine that the fast-food chain is "a great place to work" and explained that she worked there because "I was 16 and directing kids' theater, which didn't totally pay the bills." (EXPRESS)

PLOT

'And Pippa Middleton Will Play the Green Fairy'

Elton John says Justin Timberlake is his "number one" choice to star in a biopic about his life, the Los Angeles Times reported. "He played me before in a David LaChapelle video of 'Rocket Man,' and it was superb." Of the film, John said, "It's going to be a surreal look at my life, and not just a factual look at my life, more in the manner of a 'Moulin Rouge.'" (EXPRESS)

TOBY CANHAM/GETTY IMAGES

Over here, Nadya! Behind you! Hey, girl! Turn 180 degrees clockwise! Or counterclockwise! Sign my newspaper!

WARNING

Never Share Your Password

Nadya "Octomom" Suleman's Facebook, Twitter and UStream pages went dark Monday. "I fired my manager today and she's a little upset, so she shut down all my profiles online," Suleman told Radaronline.com. "I'll have to now start from scratch and set up my own Facebook and Twitter, as she had done all that for me." (EXPRESS)

Victims

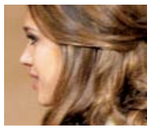
Old Acquaintance, Be Forgot

Rosie O'Donnell was not allowed into Sean "Diddy" Combs' New Year's Eve party, the New York Post reported. Sources said she brought a six-person entourage, and, though O'Donnell had been invited, security turned the group away. (EXPRESS)

ASTRONOMY

World Realizes in Horror That It Revolves Around TMZ

Maria Shriver was wearing "something" on the ring finger of her left hand Tuesday, TMZ.com reported. Arnold Schwarzenegger was seen wearing his wedding ring recently. "Interesting she wore something on *that* finger just after we posted the pic of Arnold," TMZ noted. (EXPRESS)



"I have 1,200-calorie meals delivered. But I also work out, so basically I'm starving. It sucks. I drink a lot of water."

— **JESSICA ALBA,** TO LUCKY MAGAZINE, ON HOW SHE REGAINED HER BIKINI BODY FOUR MONTHS AFTER GIVING BIRTH TO HER SECOND CHILD.

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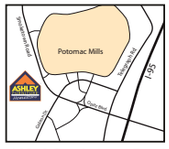

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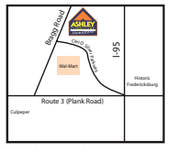

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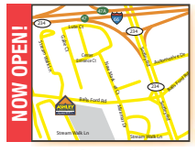

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